

Message Text

SECRET

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DRAFTED BY:S/S-O:R. PERITO

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 301749 TOSEC 320222

EXDIS

FOLLOWING JIDDA 7950 SENT ACTION SECSTATE DEC 11; REPEATED
TO YOU QUOTE

S E C R E T JIDDA 7950

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, PFOR, SA, US

SUBJECT: KING'S LETTER OF DEC. 9 TO PRESIDENT FORD

REF (A) JIDDA 7941, (B) JIDDA 7785, (C) JIDDA 7800

1. SUBJECT LETTER REFLECTS SAUDI MOOD NOTED IN REFTEL B.

2. I ASSUME PRESIDENT FORD DECIDED TO COMMUNICATE PRIVATELY
WITH KING KHALID THROUGH SAUDI AMBASSADOR TO U.S. AND SAUDIS
RESPONDED BY ASKING ME TO SEND DIRECT REPLY TO PRESIDENT FORD
THROUGH OUR CHANNELS.

3. THE PHRASEOLOGY, DETAIL AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE LETTER ARE
NOT TYPICAL, THOUGH I FEEL CERTAIN THAT TRUE FEELINGS OF SAUDI
HIERARCHY TOWARD PRESIDENT FORD ARE REFLECTED IN THE VERY
CORDIAL EXPRESSIONS IN THE PENULTIMATE AND FINAL PARAGRAPHS.
THE MULTIPLE ASSURANCES OF ESTEEM FOR PRESIDENT FORD BY THE

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KING, THE CROWN PRINCE AND PRINCE SAUD ARE UNPRECEDENTED IN

MY EXPERIENCE.

4. CONSTRUCTION OF SECOND AND THIRD PARAGRAPHS OF THE LETTER BRINGS ME TO BELIEVE THAT SAUDIS FEEL THEY MUST GO ALONG WITH PRICE RISE SOMEWHERE BETWEEN FIVE AND TEN PER CENT. IN ACCEPTING THAT, HOWEVER, THEY COULD GO FOR DELAY TO PERMIT THEM TO CONTACT NEW AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION.

5. THERE IS STILL TIME FOR EFFORT TO INFLUENCE OUTCOME OF OPEC MEETING, ESPECIALLY AMOUNT OF INCREASE AND EFFECTIVE DATE OF INCREASE. IF PRESIDENT AND PRESIDENT-ELECT ARE SO INCLINED, THEY COULD HAVE CROWN PRINCE FAHD INFORMED THAT HE WILL BE INVITED TO UNITED STATES NEXT YEAR AFTER NEW ADMINISTRATION ASSUMES OFFICE (REFTEL C). SUCH AN ASSURANCE SHOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY QUALIFICATION TO EFFECT THAT VISIT WOULD PROBABLY BE ARRANGED AT EARLY DATE IF USG NOT RPT NOT COPING WITH ECONOMIC PRESSURES ARISING FROM PRICE INCREASE. SUCH AN EFFORT WOULD BE MANAGEABLE HERE. PLEASE NOTE PRINCE FAHD WILL BE REGENT FOR NEXT TEN DAYS TO TWO WEEKS.

6. ING KHALID'S COMMENTS IN THE PENULTIMATE PARAGRAPH OF HIS LETTER CONCERNING ALLEGED STATEMENTS BY PRESIDENT-ELECT ARE ALL NEWS TO US. PEOPLE HAVE BEEN HERE PRETENDING TO BE FAMILIAR WITH VIEWS OF THE PRESIDENT-ELECT, BUT WE HAVE NO INFORMATION AS TO WHAT THEY SAID PRIVATELY TO SAUDIS. NOR HAVE WE SEEN NEWS REPORTS WHICH WOULD SUPPORT SUCH STATEMENTS. PORTER UNQUOTE ROBINSON

SECRET

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